

## ABSTRACT

A method for producing an oligomeric form of  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin which is in the molten globule-like state is described. The method suitably comprises exposing a source of  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin in which the  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin is preferably in the molten globule-like state, to an ion exchange medium which has been pre-treated with casein or an active component thereof, such as oleic acid, and recovering  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin in an oligomeric form therefrom. Pre-treatment of the ion exchange medium, particularly with casein derived from human milk, has been found to significantly improve yields of the oligomeric form of  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin. As a result,  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin can be readily isolated from readily available sources such as bovine  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin. This oligomeric form of  $\alpha$ -lactalbumin is useful therapeutically, in particular as an antibacterial agent and also as an anti-cancer therapeutic.